

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SS-15 NSC-05 CCO-00

SSO-00 NSCE-00 PA-01 INR-07 SP-02 USIE-00 INRE-00

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DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTON, JR./HLK

APPROVED BY P - JOSEPH J. SISCO

SS-O: JHOGANSON

NEA/P - MR. SHERMAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

INFO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DOHA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SANA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: VN/A

TAGS: OVIP (ATHERTON,ALFRED L., JR.)

SUBJECT: PRESS TREATMENT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON'S
VISIT TO NORTH AFRICA

1. WE PLAN NO ANNOUNCEMENT OF ATHERTON'S OCTOBER 18-24
VISIT TO TUNISIA, ALGERIA AND MOROCCO AND WANT TO PLAY IT
IN AS LOW KEY AS POSSIBLE. GIVEN DEVELOPMENTS OF LAST
FEW DAYS RE SPANISH SAHARA, HOWEVER, THERE WILL INEVITABLY
BE SPECULATION THAT HIS VISIT TO MOROCCO AT LEAST IS RE-
LATED TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS.

2. IF QUERIED, WE WILL RESPOND AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE:
ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON IS TRAVELING TO TUNIS TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING OF THE U.S.-TUNISIAN JOINT
COMMISSION. THAT MEETING AND HIS ATTENDANCE HAVE BEEN
SCHEDULED FOR SOME TIME. WHILE HE IS IN THE AREA, SECRE-
TARY KISSINGER HAS SUGGESTED TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF ALGERIA
AND MOROCCO THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEND MR. ATHERTON TO
DISCUSS MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST WITH THEIR LEADERS.
THEY HAVE AGREED TO THIS SUGGESTION, AND MR. ATHERTON
WILL THEREFORE BE PROCEEDING TO ALGIERS AND RABAT ON HIS
WAY BACK TO WASHINGTON. CLOSE QUOTE.

3. IF QUERIED AS TO WHETHER MIDDLE EAST SITUATION WILL BE
DISCUSSED, WE WILL REPLY THAT THIS IS CLEARLY AMONG
THE MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND WE EXPECT THERE WILL
BE AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT.

4. IF ASKED WHETHER ATHERTON'S TRIP IS RELATED TO
DEVELOPMENTS WITH RESPECT TO THE SAHARA, WE WILL REPLY
THAT THE TRIP WAS PLANNED BEFORE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS
AND THAT HIS TALKS IN MOROCCO WILL COVER A RANGE OF
MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL QUESTIONS. NO DOUBT THESE
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WILL INCLUDE THE SAHARA SITUATION.

5. IF ASKED WHETHER ATHERTON IS CARRYING ANY U.S.
PROPOSALS ON THE SAHARA, WE WILL REPLY THAT HE IS
NOT: WE, OF COURSE, ARE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS WITH
RESPECT TO THE SAHARA WITH INTEREST SINCE THEY INVOLVE
GOVERNMENTS WITH WHOM WE HAVE CLOSE AND FRIENDLY TIES
BUT OUR POSITION REMAINS THAT THIS IS A MATTER BEST

DEALT WITH THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS AMONG THE PARTIES.

6. IF ASKED WHETHER ATHERTON WILL BE MAKING CONTACT WITH PALESTINIANS, WE WILL REPLY NO.

7. ACTION ADDRESSEES MAY INFORM HOST GOVERNMENTS OF FOREGOING PRESS GUIDANCE AND MAY DRAW UPON IT IF QUERIED. WE LEAVE TO HOST GOVERNMENTS ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS THEY WISH TO MAKE WITH RESPECT TO APPOINTMENTS MR. ATHERTON WILL HAVE WHILE IN THEIR COUNTRIES. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE248372
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ALATHERTON, JR./HLK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750361-1070
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751041/aaaabkvs.tel
Line Count: 125
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <07 OCT 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS TREATMENT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON'S VISIT TO NORTH AFRICA
TAGS: OVIP, (ATHERTON, ALFRED L JR)
To: RABAT TUNIS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006